

Message Text

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ACTION IO-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-06 NEA-09 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04

SIL-01 OIC-02 SCCT-01 IOE-00 AF-06 ARA-06 /109 W

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P R 221505Z JAN 75

FM USMISSION GENEVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 119

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USMISSION USUN NY

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L GENEVA 0342

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ILO, PLO, PFOR, AORG, ELAB, IS

SUBJECT: ILO - REQUEST FOR POSTPONEMENT OF CONSIDERATION OF PLO
OBSERVER STATUS

REF: A. STATE 012808 NOTAL; B. GENEVA 323 NOTAL

PASS LABOR FOR SEGALL, PERSONS AND QUACKENBUSH

1. SUMMARY. BLANCHARD MADE IT CLEAR HE WAS NOT OPTIMISTIC ABOUT
POSTPONING PLO OBSERVER STATUS ISSUE TO MAY SESSION OF GOVERNING
BODY BECAUSE HE EXPECTS PRO-PLO MEMBERS TO ACTIVELY SEEK G.B.

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DECISION AT FEB-MAR SESSION. HE WOULD LIKE TO HELP BUT FEELS HIS

ROLE IS LIMITED. BLANCHARD SUGGESTED US MAY BE ABLE TO NEGOTIATE A POSTPONEMENT IF IT ACTS QUICKLY SO THAT THE SCENARIO IS IN PLACE BEFORE THE STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE MEETS ON FEB 18 AND IF THE US IS WILLING TO PAY A PRICE IN THE GB ELECTIONS IN JUNE. END SUMMARY.

2. ARABS LIKELY TO PRESS ISSUE--BLANCHARD SAID HE EXPECTED ARABS AND THEIR ALLIES TO PRESS FOR DECISION AT FEB-MAR GB SESSION. AFTER NOV SESSION ARAB REPS HAS EXPRESSED DISCONTENT WITH HIS ROLE AND THAT OF SECRETARIAT IN POSTPONING PLO ISSUE TO FEB-MAR GB SESSION. SINCE THEN THE ILO REPRESENTATIVE IN CAIRO AND ALSO A HIGH OFFICIAL IN THE EGYPTIAN LABOR MINISTRY HAVE TOLD HIM THE ARABS WERE PREPARING TO DEMAND A DECISION IN MARCH. BLANCHARD FELT THESE PREPARATIONS WERE CONNECTED WITH THE UPCOMING MEETING OF AFRICAN LABOR MINISTERS IN TRIPOLI. BLANCHARD SAID FURTHER OMEN OCCURRED DURING THE WEEKEND WHEN MOROCCAN GB CHAIRMAN UNEXPECTEDLY CONCELED CONSULTATION TRIP TO GENEVA; WHEN BLANCHARD CALLED RABAT TO FIND OUT WHY, HE WAS TOLD KHATTABI WAS OUT OF TOWN AND WOULD NOT BE BACK UNTIL LATER THIS WEEK. BLANCHARD SAID HE WOULD CONTINUE TO TRY TO REACH KHATTABI BUT IF THE ARABS AND THE GROUP OF 77 PRESSED THE PLO ISSUE THE CHANCES FOR A POSTPONEMENT WERE SLIM. LDC SOLIDARITY WAS STRONG AND THE WORKERS AND EMPLOYERS GROUPS WERE BADLY SPLIT ON THE PLO ISSUE. IN THIS CONTEXT, HE REGRETTED THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE AFL-CIO FOR THE ICFTU. HE SAID HE COULD NOT SEE HOW HE COULD BRING ABOUT A POSTPONEMENT BUT THAT HE WOULD WELCOME OUR SUGGESTIONS. HE POINTED OUT THAT EVEN IF THE PLO WAS GIVEN OBSERVER STATUS NOW, THAT THIS WOULD ONLY ADVANCE IN TIME WHAT WAS INEVITABLE AT THE JUNE CONFERENCE ANYWAY, AND WOULD MEAN NO MORE NOW THAT IN JUNE BECAUSE THE PLO WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO MAKE STATEMENTS AT ILO UNTIL THE CONFERENCE APPROVES THEIR STATUS.

3. THE STATE OF PLAY AT THE GOVERNING BODY---THE STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE WHICH MEETS FEB 18, IS NOW SEIZED WITH THE TASK OF DRAFTING AMENDMENTS WHICH WILL ALLOW OBSERVER STATUS FOR THE PLO. BLANCHARD EXPECTS THE COMMITTEE REPORT WILL BLANDLY PROPOSE OBSERVER STATUS FOR LIBERATION MOVEMENTS (UNNAMED) RECOGNIZED BY THE OAU AND THE ARAB LEAGUE. ON MOST ISSUES THE GV CAN POSTPONE A DECISION IF A NUMBER OF COUNTRIES PLEAD LACK OF INSTRUCTIONS, INSUFFICIENT TIME TO CONSIDER, ETC. BECAUSE OF CONFIDENTIAL

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EXPECTED ARAB PRESSURE (PARA 2 ABOVE) BLANCHARD DOES NOT BELIEVE THIS TACTIC WILL WORK ON THE PLO ISSUE; HE IS LESS SURE BUT HAS STRONG DOUBTS THAT PROPOSED AMENDMENTS WHICH DO NOT NAME THE PLO WILL BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE PLO SUPPORTERS AND THE GB.

4. BLANCHARD'S ADVICE---AS HE SEES IT ONLY A SUBTLE APPROACH IN CERTAIN COUNTRIES AT A POLITICALLY HIGH LEVEL STAND A CHANCE OF ACHIEVING POSTPONEMENT. BLANCHARD SUGGESTED THAT THE U.S.

MAKE SOUNDINGS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AT THE HIGHEST POLITICAL LEVELS IN SELECTED LEADING COUNTRIES OF THE GROUP OF 77. HE MENTIONED VENEZUELA AND MEXICO (AT LEVELS HIGHER THAN PINEDA AND MUNOZ-LEDO) AND IN TUNIS AND MOROCCO (TO KHATTABI DIRECTLY). HE ALLUDED TO THE SOVIET UNION BUT DID NOT SUGGEST A CONTACT. HE SIAD THE ATMOSPHERE IN THE GB WAS VERY POLITICAL BECAUSE OF THE ELECTIONS IN JUNE AND THAT PERHAPS "SOMETHING COULD BE WORKED OUT". BLANCHARD WARNED AGAINST APPROACHING "YOUR FRIENDS", AT LEAST IN A WAY THAT WOULD LAY BARE THE WHOLE US POSITION; BLANCHARD SAID THE EC-9 COULD "ONLY AGREE UPON ABSTENTION" AND INTIMATED THAT US APPROACHES MIGHT BE LEAKED. IF US SOUNDINGS OF THE GROUP OF 77 WERE UNSUCCESSFUL HE WARNED AGAINST TAKING A STAND AGAINST THE PLO WHICH WOULD SERVE TO UNIFY THE GROUP OF 77 AND TO ISOLATE THE US AND VITIATE ITS INFLUENCES ON OTHER IMPORTANT ISSUES IN THE ILO.

5. BLANCHARD LEAVES GENEVA THIS MORNING AND WILL NOT BE BACK UNTIL FEB 10. IN THE INTERIM MCDONALD AND FRANCIS WOLF WILL BE ACTION OFFICERS ON THE PLO ISSUE. ALTHOUGH ARAB CHAGRIN OVER THE POSTPONEMENT DECISION WAS APPARENT IN NOV., UNTIL NOW NEITHER BLANCHARD NOR WOLF NOT OTHER GENEVA SOURCES HAVE NOTED ANY ARAB INTEREST IN A STRONG FOLLOW-UP ON THE PLO ISSUE AT THE COMING GV SESSION.

6. COMMENT: BLANCHARD GAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THE INTENTION OF THE ARABS TO PRESS FOR A DECISION ON THE PLO HAS LIMITED HIS ABILITY TO DRAG HIS FEET. ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT MENTION IT, HE IS PREBABLY AWARE OF THE REPORTED PLO INTENTION TO OPEN A FIELD OFFICE IN GENEVA (REF B). SINCE HE SEES SOME FORM OF OBSERVER STATUS FOR THE PLO AT THE CONFERENCE AS INEVITABLE, HE IS RELUCTANT TO EXPOSE HIMSELF AND THE SECRETARIAT ON A DELAYING TACTIC UNLESS THERE IS CLEAR EVIDENCE THAT IT WILL SUCCEED AND THIS IS PRESUMABLY WHY HE IS
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PUTTING THE BALL IN OUR COURT. IF WE CAN ASSURE HIM OF SUFFICIENT SUPPORT AND IF THE INITIATIVE FOR POSTPONEMENT DOES NOT APPEAR TO COME FROM HIM WE FEEL BLANCHARD WILL BE COOPERATIVE. DEPT AND D.O.L. SHOULD BEAR IN MIND THAT BLANCHARD WISHES TO AVOID A UNESCO TYPE CONFRONTATION AND THAT HE FEELS THAT A POORLY SUPPORTED MOVE FOR POSTPONEMENT COULD BRING ABOUT BROADER RATHER THAN FORE NARROWLY DEFINED STATUS FOR THE PLS. ABRAMS

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